



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/695,956	10/30/2003	Andreas Wachtler	MERCK-1497-D03	6268
23599	7590	03/24/2004	EXAMINER	
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C. 2200 CLARENDON BLVD. SUITE 1400 ARLINGTON, VA 22201			WU, SHEAN CHIU	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1756	

DATE MAILED: 03/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/695,956

Applicant(s)

WACHTLER ET AL.

Examiner

Shean C Wu

Art Unit

1756

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. Claim 6 provides for the use of the phenylcyclohexanes of the formula I as components of liquid crystalline media for electrooptical displays, but, since the claim does not set forth any steps involved in the method/process, it is unclear what method/process applicant is intending to encompass. A claim is indefinite where it merely recites a use without any active, positive steps delimiting how this use is actually practiced.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed recitation of a use, without setting forth any steps involved in the process, results in an improper definition of a process, i.e., results in a claim which is not a proper process claim under 35 U.S.C. 101. See for example *Ex parte Dunki*, 153 USPQ 678 (Bd.App. 1967) and *Clinical Products, Ltd. v. Brenner*, 255 F. Supp. 131, 149 USPQ 475 (D.D.C. 1966).

Interference

2. Claims 1-2, 4 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 135(b) as not being made prior to one year from the date on which U.S. Patent No. 5,382,379 was granted. See *In re McGrew*, 120 F.3d 1236, 1238, 43 USPQ2d 1632,1635 (Fed. Cir. 1997) where the Court held that the application of 35 U.S.C. 135(b) is not limited to *inter partes* interference proceedings, but may be used as a basis for *ex parte* rejections.

The claims (1-3, 7 and 9) of US '379 read on the present claims 1-2, 4 and 7.

Art Unit: 1756

3. Claims 1-4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 135(b) as not being made prior to one year from the date on which U.S. Patent No. 5,174,921 was granted. See *In re McGrew*, 120 F.3d 1236, 1238, 43 USPQ2d 1632,1635 (Fed. Cir. 1997) where the Court held that the application of 35 U.S.C. 135(b) is not limited to *inter partes* interference proceedings, but may be used as a basis for *ex parte* rejections.

The claims (1-10) of US '921 read on the present claims 1-4 and 7.

4. Claims 1-4 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 135(b) as not being made prior to one year from the date on which U.S. Patent No. 5,292,452 was granted. See *In re McGrew*, 120 F.3d 1236, 1238, 43 USPQ2d 1632,1635 (Fed. Cir. 1997) where the Court held that the application of 35 U.S.C. 135(b) is not limited to *inter partes* interference proceedings, but may be used as a basis for *ex parte* rejections.

The claims (1-5, 7-16) of US '452 read on the present claims 1-4 and 7-8.

Double Patenting

5. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Art Unit: 1756

6. Claims 1-4 and 7-8 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,458,805. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the present claims overlap with the claims of US '805.

7. Claims 1-2, 4-5 and 7-8 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 5,891,360. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the present claims overlap with the claims of US '360.

8. Claims 1-5 and 7-8 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,284,154. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the present claims overlap with the claims of US '154.

9. Claims 1-4 and 7-8 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,677,002. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the present claims overlap with the claims of US '002.

Art Unit: 1756

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 1-2, 4-5 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Buchecker et al. (US 4,770,503).

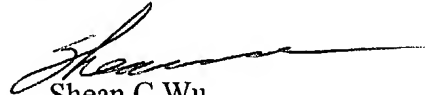
The reference compound represented by the formula IA reads on the present claim when the terminal group is CN and X is F. See scheme 2 from col. 5 to col. 6. Also see Example 1 and claims 1, 23 and 24. The reference anticipates the claimed invention. If not anticipated, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art to follow the guideline of scheme 2 of the reference by using a fluorinated phenyl ring as a starting material to arrive at the claimed invention.

Art Unit: 1756

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shean C Wu whose telephone number is 571-272-1393. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Huff can be reached on 571-272-1385. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Shean C Wu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1756

SCW